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MEMORANDUM

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

ACTION

SECRET/SENSITIVE

May 8, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR:

SECRETARY KISSINGER

PH/PLS/for

WG/PLS/for

FROM:

PHILIP HABIB/WILLIAM GLEYSTEEN

SUBJECT:

WINSTON LORD WL/PLS/for

RICHARD H. SOLOMON RHS

Your Tour d'Horizon with Huang Chen
on Friday, May 9, 1975, at 5:00 p.m.

5:30

You requested this meeting with PRC Liaison Office Chief Huang Chen for a general review of international developments. The Chinese interpreter for this session is likely to be Miss Shen Jo-yun. Mr. Chi has returned to Peking. We mention this in part because Miss Shen's English is not up to Mr. Chi's standard, and hence some of the more elliptical ways of discussing the delicate issues which will be covered in this session may not get through to her. In addition, we have always wondered about Miss Shen's particularly close association with Mao's wife, Chiang Ch'ing. She (Shen) has not presented herself as open and flexible on political issues, or as sympathetic to the American connection, as Mr. Chi.

The following memorandum has been put together with two purposes in mind. Primarily it is to brief you for your meeting with Huang. However, we also use the tabbed sections on the various topics for discussion to review developments since your November, 1974 visit to Peking, inasmuch as you indicated an interest in covering a wide range of topics with Huang. We are concerned about the length of the memo, but feel it is the best way to bring you up to date for your tour d'horizon.

The Objectives of the Meeting

This will be your first major substantive discussion with a PRC official since your last trip to Peking in November, 1974. In the interim, developments in Indochina and elsewhere have radically transformed the political context within which both we and the Chinese are operating. (We review changes in this context in some detail below.) We see our primary purposes to be served by the meeting:

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-- Global: To project firmness and purposefulness regarding the Administration's foreign policy; a sense of determination to persist in efforts to influence world events in order to attain the primary goals of our foreign policy -- despite the developments in Indochina and our domestic political mood. In this regard, you should outline the state of play and our objectives in various key areas, including: the Soviet factor in world affairs; the President's trip to Europe and our relations with NATO and Japan; prospects for the Middle East and Persian Gulf, etc.

-- Asia: To caution the Chinese about the threat to our shared interests if recent developments in Indochina heighten tensions in other parts of Asia. You should, in particular, indicate concern about possible developments in Korea in the wake of Kim Il-song's visit to Peking. At the same time, you should mention the problems we both now face in stabilizing the region so that the Soviets are impeded in their efforts to seek greater access to Southeast and Northeast Asia. In effect, you should imply possible linkage between Chinese cooperation on third-country issues and further progress in our bilateral relations.

-- Bilateral: To further position ourselves for the dialogue in coming months on normalization. Bilateral relations should not comprise a major element in this particular discussion. However, you should obliquely indicate to Huang that the domestic political forces which have been mobilized in the wake of the collapse of the American position in Indochina will not be helpful to the evolution of U.S.-PRC relations. At the same time, you should state that we continue to adhere to the normalization process, and perhaps make some low-key reference to the question of the timing of the President's visit to Peking. You may also wish to indicate an interest in sustaining a visible political relationship over the coming months, as by raising the question of the timing of a Congressional visit to the PRC in the next four months (as was agreed to in principle last November), or by responding to Huang's request that his wife have an opportunity to call on the First Lady.

You should assume that the Chinese are somewhat confused, and perhaps actively disturbed, by apparently contradictory statements on China policy made recently by the President, yourself, and Secretary Schlesinger -- particularly Mr. Ford's statement in his press conference of May 6 that he intends to "reaffirm our commitments to Taiwan." You should not initiate a defensive comment on these apparently contradictory statements, but wait to see whether Huang raises any questions about them. If he does not, at the end of the session you might conclude by

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stating that our commitment to normalization is unchanged, and that particular attention should be paid to the President's speech to the Congress of April 10, and your press conference of April 29, as authoritative expressions of our constant position.

-- Chinese views: To seek to draw Huang Chen out on PRC perceptions of recent developments and their immediate intentions in the Asian region and elsewhere. In preparing for this discussion he will have received some new substantive guidance from Peking. Conceivably you will be able to gain some insight from him regarding Chinese perspectives on recent developments -- rather than just conducting the kind of monologue that has characterized most of your sessions with Huang.

The Altered Political Context

The rapid erosion of the American presence in Indochina and other developments (e.g., southern NATO and the Middle East) has substantially altered the political climate within which we and the PRC will operate over the coming year. For the U.S. the collapse of friendly governments in Saigon and Phnom Penh has initiated a period of retesting our relationships with other governments in Asia. Inevitably the prospect is one of some further reduction of our ability to project American influence in the region.

Recent developments have also substantially complicated the political context which will affect the normalization process. Domestic critics of normalization will assert the need to hold to all existing security relationships to prevent the further erosion of trust in our intentions and the credibility of our commitments. Friendly foreign governments which still look to the U.S. for security assistance will interpret our actions over the coming months as indicators of how we are reordering our priorities and coping with Congressional constraints on foreign policy.

As far as Peking's reaction to recent events is concerned, we have received multiple indications from diplomatic and CAS reporting that the Chinese hope for a sustained, if consolidated, American role in Asia and the world -- principally in countering the Soviets. As Foreign Minister Ch'iao Kuan-hua (perhaps posturing somewhat for his audience) told a group of British journalists in late April, "The Communist victory in

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Vietnam has unloaded a burden off the back of the United States, and now they can maybe play a more positive role in the Pacific. Certainly, the Soviets will expand anywhere they are able."

For Peking, the stunningly rapid insurgent victories in Vietnam and Cambodia have generated substantial new forces which will require the PRC to play a more active role in the Asian region. The Chinese already face increasingly difficult policy choices between their ideological pretensions, the interests of neighboring allies, the PRC's own national objectives, and the maneuverings of the Soviets. As was most vividly revealed in Kim Il-song's visit to Peking, China's ideological and geographical neighbors are pressing (in the face of an uncertain American presence in the region) to pursue their own interests in ways which cut across Peking's foreign policy objectives. Both Pyongyang and Hanoi have shown considerable skill in influencing Peking through a combination of dealings with the Soviets and cultivation of China's would-be "third world" constituency.

The Chinese are undoubtedly more concerned than ever now about the Russians finding openings in areas on their immediate periphery. This might come about through diplomatic maneuvering, as Hanoi, Bangkok, and other states in the region seek greater security and political flexibility through balanced big-power pressures. It might also come about as a result of the development of new areas of instability -- as seems most likely in Korea. By all evidence, Peking continues to see its interests served by further developing its relationship with the U.S. and does not desire to push the American presence totally out of Asia. The Chinese do, however, seem to look toward further consolidation of our military presence, limited perhaps to Japan, Okinawa, and Guam.

Our problem, in this regard, is how to develop a positive working relationship with the Chinese on regional issues of mutual concern (as should be the case, in particular, in Korea). We are increasingly faced with a situation where the Chinese expect our help in areas of high concern to them where their ability to act is limited (as in their repeated requests for aid to Pakistan, their diplomatic support for your negotiating efforts in the Middle East, and -- most generally -- their encouragement of our efforts to counter the Soviets) while they remain aloof and generally uncooperative in areas central to their security (as in Indochina and Korea).

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Indochina

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While one can explain away this situation in terms of the complicated game Peking must play in maneuvering between the interests of its small peripheral neighbors and Soviet pressures, it nonetheless creates a situation where people increasingly ask, "What are we getting out of our relationship with the PRC?" In short, the Chinese must understand (as perhaps they do) that the domestic political consensus which thus far has supported normalization is changing -- and with it the prospects for developing the kind of a relationship which would enhance the security of both the PRC and the U.S.

Specific Areas for Discussion

At the following tabs are brief summaries of recent developments in the specific areas we believe you should cover in the discussion. The summaries are followed by suggestive talking points. We present the various topics roughly in the order we think they should be raised. As noted above, we believe bilateral issues should be downplayed, and left for the end of the discussion, although some low-key clarification of the President's May 6 press conference remarks on Taiwan is in order.

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Indochina

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